

One of Us  
by Emilie

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One of Us

> <meta name="GENERATOR"> One of Us Title: One of Us  
Author: Emilie  
Rating: PG  
>Disclaimer: I don't own any of the BtVs gang but I love um anyway!  
<p>

Distribution: <http://www.emiliekitten.com>

Summery: Willow gets some bad news.

Feedback: It keeps me warmer then hairspray and a lighter!

Note: Nobody fall over but there are slight X/W feelings in this, I know I know Karen you can pick up your jaw now. OzMia I promise to have more Oz soon.

This is for Shannon, she beta'ed for me and I think made it a lot better then it was.

~\*~

No one ever saw it coming. One day she just fell to the ground on patrol with Buffy. She'd been coughing horribly for the past few days and Buffy had tried to talk her out of going, but Willow had shaken her head and continued to patrol with her best friend. Willow was always thinking either about others before herself, besides, nobody ever thought it was anything but a cold.

Buffy called me right after she got Willow to the hospital. She seemed calm and collected, something you'd expect from a Slayer who'd

gone through so much. By the time I got there Buffy had just gotten quiet and wouldn't say much to me, just pointed the way to Willow's room. The nurses had allowed me into the room. She was just laying there on the bed looking pale and weak, one of those hideous IV's sticking out of her arm. She smiled weakly for me, a smile that I would store away in my heart for the rest of my life.

"Xander." She breathed my name and I was by her side, carefully taking her hand into mine and staring at how thin her skin looked, you could practically see the blood vessels through how transparent it was. I guess we all just thought it was because of Oz leaving, She was thinner and her eyes had become a bit less bright then the last time I had paid attention.

Coughs racked her frail body. I held her hand a little more tightly and she brought a handkerchief to her lips. I noticed how it was spotted with blood and I winced. "Willow your going to be okay y'know. What did the doctor say?"

"They say I have lung cancer, Xander. I'm dying." She shuddered as she said the words and held my hand tighter then looked possible.

"There are treatments though. You'll get better, your a Slayerette, Will, you'll pull through." Her eyes were sad, dimmer then I had ever seen the green orbs.

"Xander, I want you to find him for me." I started, she must have felt me jerk because her eyes showed a slight fear in them. "Please Xander, if I don't. . I couldn't ask Buffy or Tara or even Giles. You're the only one who would understand why I need to see him. I love him."

I stared at her hand clasped in mine, the perfection of her flawless ivory skin. "I don't know how Willow.. he could be anywhere, and it doesn't matter because your not going anywhere! You can sit with me and we can wait for him for years if that's what it takes. He'll come back to you, who could ever leave you Wills?" Her face hardened slightly.

"He can. He did. Xander, he left me. I know he left to protect me, I understand that but I might not have time to wait for him to come back.. the doctors say that if I don't find a donor that I don't have a chance.

I jumped up, "I'll do it!"

Then I let go of her hand. "I'll be the donor, but Willow, I'm not leaving your side. Not through this, please don't make me. . ." Coughs shuddered her whole body again and it felt like it was my lungs heaving and throbbing not hers.

I dropped my head as Willow looked as if she might cry. "You know I hate it

>when you look like that." <p>

"Xander please, I don't know what else to do.. its all I can think about. . that I might not ever get to say. . what I need to say to him. " I saw her eyes mist over and I was done as a turkey on Thanksgiving day.

"I'll go to Angel, see if I can get some help with his little.. investigations thingy." She nodded, she was beautiful even now.

"Before you go.. can you call Tara for me please?" I took a deep breath and smiled bravely for her, puffing out my chest.

"Whatever my lady asks shall be done." She blessed me with one of those smiles that would illuminate a room if it didn't already have florescent lighting.

"Thanks Xand." I moved out the door towards the pay-phone to make one of

>the most painful calls of my life. Then I had to leave for LA to find someone for my best friend to say goodbye to. She hadn't said it, but it was there, that ominous goodbye hint in her voice. <br>She didn't want to hope for a miracle recovery, Willow knew her fate was coming and she'd accepted it.

We'd fought demons and vampires together. Fended off the mouth of hell. But how was she ever going to fight something that was inside. When was I going to wake up from the nightmare that I was having? Because this couldn't be real.

~\*~End 1~\*~

>I got the car from uncle Rory, I had to give him a hundred dollar down payment. I don't remember exactly how I got the money, but I was pretty sure he was going to end up spending it all on schnapps.  
<p>

I slid into the vinyl interior of the '57 Chevy Belo Air. Memories washed back

>through me of the first night I had driven this car, the night with Faith. <br>That night had changed my life. I'd grown so much then, and now I was doing something I thought I would never have to do. Giving my best friend her last wish.

I shook myself and slid the shades on over my eyes, I started up the car then rolled my eyes at the fact the needle was on E. Now I would have to pay for gas. I would have to complain to Rory, after I got back.

I made one last stop at the hospital to look in on Willow, she was in her room with Tara. I didn't interrupt, they were holding hands and it looked like Tara was crying. I wish that's how I could spend my days, holding Willow's hand and crying over past times with her, but I had a mission.

>~\*~ <br>I eased the car off of the freeway and turned down one of the more empty streets of LA, where Angel Investigations was centered. My stomach flip flopped a bit at the thought of seeing Cordelia again, after so many months of having no contact with the Ex beauty Queen.

I missed her banter and missed her. I guess I was some kind of masochist missing the way she'd treated me for most of my life. . Sometimes I thought about her when I held Anya in my arms. I would think about all the times she would let a little humanity slip, the times she had been part of me and I part of her. We had something special, for the few short months we'd

>been together it had been magic, we both had \*it\*, whatever \*it\* was. Then I'd spoiled it all, I spoil everything. <p>

I guess that's why I'm wondering why Willow sent me on this mission when I should be at home with he. Everything seemed to loop back together. Willow, Cordelia, Buffy, Oz, death. It was all connected, at least in my twisted mind. Letting myself in the front door I climbed up the stairs to the little office they had. I took a deep breath and walked in, smelling her perfume before I saw her.

She was sitting at the desk, typing something up and staring at her hands every few minutes as if asking them to find the damn keys. I loved that about her, how she demanded the most from everyone, including herself. She glanced up and I saw something like shock and happiness sparkle in her eyes. It faded quickly and she stood up.

"Xander." She said my name the way she always did, with the hint of annoyance

>even if I hadn't done anything. <p>

"I need to see Angel."

"He's a very busy undead person Xander! You can't come barging in here to

>chum around about how you both had big yens for Buffy the Super Slayer." Her <br>words cut deep but I didn't let them phase me.

"Why Cordelia, I think I hear a bit of jealousy in your voice . Could it be?" I

>paused. "Did you \*miss\* me?" She looked taken aback. <p>

Angel took that moment to appear."Xander come in." I grinned for Cordelia, the big goofy grin I knew used to make her melt. I nodded and moved towards him, past Cordelia without another word. I knew she was glaring at the back of my head, and I acted like I didn't care, just like high school. God, I had missed her.

>~\*~ <p>

"...So I need to find Oz," I finished. I had explained it all to him, everything, including some stuff he didn't need to know. He was a pretty damn good listener when he wanted to be.

I opened up to him, to Angel. This is the guy that I had been rivals with for \*three years\* for Buffy's affections.

He stood up and glanced out the window, it was past dusk now. I had no idea where the day had gone or how the curtains had opened. Maybe I had been too busy talking to notice.

"I can help you, he was here a few weeks ago."

I stood up, "You mean he was \*here\*? You didn't call? Do you know what HELL Willow has been going through?" Angel turned to me, I could see it in his eyes. He knew, and that's why he hadn't called and told. He and Oz were in the same boat, only now did it dawn on me.

I shook my head, "Man. I don't know if when I see him I'm gonna be

able to stop from punching him. For leaving her to face this alone." \*For taking me away from her when I need to be there with her.\* I added to myself. Angel just shrugged and grabbed a folder moving towards the door.

He opened it and Cordelia practically fell on him. "Oh, um, there was a spot. Which I was cleaning with my.. Don't look at me like that Angel! YOU KNOW I WAS LISTENING." She looked down and then threw her arms up. She turned around and tromped back to her desk mumbling about damned broody bat-cave dwelling vampires who wouldn't let her eavesdrop in peace. Then I noticed him sitting here on a couch.

"Wesley?" It felt like I had been punched in the gut. Cordelia and Wesley? It wasn't my business I said to myself, and tried to ignore the pain in my heart.

"Halo Xander." He said with his smug British accent, I could see it in his face. He was rubbing it in, he was with her and I wasn't. He had the smooth British moves and the older man thing going for him.

I turned to Angel, "Well I should probably go and find a motel. I'll come back in the morning to see if you turn anything up." Angel nodded and Cordelia jumped up.

"Your not staying in a motel." I gave her a confused look. "I, uh, I have to show off my apartment to you. You can sleep on the couch, just watch out for flying vases when you enter cause.. I have a roommate. Extremely jealous and paranoid." I shrugged, anything sounded better than a buggy two dollar a night motel. Plus I didn't think I had enough money to call to Sunnydale and I really wanted to talk to Willow.

~\*~End 2~\*~

>The phone rang next to my ear and I fell off the couch I was half laying on. Cordelia stormed into the room and glared at the floating phone. <p>

"Phantom Dennis!" Cordelia yelled. I looked up from the floor at the phone.

"I told you! I'm not going to have sex with Xander! Get over this little protective bit, we went to high school together for gods. . ." I snatched the phone and clicked talk.

"Hello, Chase residence, are you sure you want to be calling here?" Cordelia turned her wrath on me.

"Xander, its me."

"Hi Angel. You're up bright and early. . "

"Its 10:30 Xander." I glanced at the clock on the table next to the couch, yep 10:30.

"Well, okay, fine. What?"

"I found him." I almost dropped the phone but caught myself.

"We'll be right there."

~\*~

>I sat in Angel's office slightly dazed at what he was telling me.  
<p>

"He never left, he's there."

"No, he would have told Willow. . he couldn't be there." Angel shrugged and showed me the paper work.

"He's been staying with his Aunt and Uncle, all his mail has been forwarded there and he's just. . there." I glared at Angel angrily.

"So he's been there this whole time and never told anyone?" I nearly screamed, maybe I was overreacting but I didn't care.

"Basically. He needed time alone, after he was here the last time he just. . went back. Maybe he's been looking for a way to come back Xander. You don't know the circumstances."

"I don't need to know his circumstances. I gotta go." I stood up, knowing that Angel was probably thinking I was acting like a spoiled child. He had been there the whole time and never told Willow, she was dying and she'd sent me on a wild goose chase when all I had to do was look in my own backyard.

"Xander, can you wait? I'm coming with you." I stared at Cordelia, slightly  
>dumbfounded. <p>

"Your coming with me?" She nodded, she looked slightly shaken and I just wanted to hug her. Maybe I should have but I already had too many complications in my life. "Fine. Hurry up. One suitcase, I'm not going to carry your bedroom with me." Something like hurt flashed across her face and she nodded.

"Angel I'll be back in a week or two." She shouted, already moving towards the stairs. Angel didn't even respond. Maybe deep down he knew she would want to be with her friends at this hard time, I would never know.

>~\*~ <br>I had my foot hard on the pedal the whole way to Sunnydale, it was like a blur the whole way home. I vaguely recall Cordelia screaming about slowing down over half of the way there, I didn't even bother to respond to her screeching.

We rolled into the small town around eight that night. I dropped Cordelia off at the hospital where I knew everyone would be, directing her to the floor Willow was on. She grabbed her little satchel of clothes, glancing back at me once before trudging up the steps of Sunnydale General.

I pulled the car away from the curb and started towards the address where Oz was staying, somewhere deep down I prayed I had enough self control not to kill him.

~\*~

I knocked on the door, checking the address one more time before a

little kid answered it. He stared up at me with huge green eyes that reminded me of the stoic werewolf. He had his own little set of red spikes too, Oz was definitely staying here.

"Hi."

"Hello, is um, Oz here?" The kid looked confused then realization dawned on him.

"Oh Daniel?"

I nodded, the kid ran into the house leaving the door wide open. I just stood there like a big dumb dork, I didn't want to just walk into the house so I just. . stayed.

Oz came out of the hall, he looked slightly nervous. "Hey, Xander." He said in a cool voice as he spotted me.

My voice wouldn't work, it was like my throat had closed up. He moved away from the door, motioning me to come in and I did. Followed him into the living room that looked so normal for a family of werewolves. I had expected like, something weird but it looked like something out of Better Homes and Gardens.

He must have expected me to find him, or someone else, because he didn't seem too shocked.

"Do you want a soda or something?" I snapped, my fist connected with his jaw before I could even think.

"She's dying. You've been three blocks away from her, and she's dying!" Oz stared up at me, his face wasn't showing any emotion. He just stared at me from where I had knocked him to the floor. Somebody started screaming from behind me and I heard feet pounding on the floor.

All of a sudden I was knocked to the ground, something was on my back, screeching and hitting me. I realized it was Jordy, my mind panicked. If he scratched or bit me it would be all over. I bucked and tried to throw him off, Oz was up pulling him away from me too. He must have realized the emergency of the situation as well, he was shouting at Jordy to stop.

The kid kicked and screamed at me as Oz held him back trying to calm him down. I realized I had made the wrong move in hurting Oz, it was like threatening someone in a wolf pack. I'd seen on the discovery channel how viciously wolves defended the males of their packs, especially from outsiders. I was the outsider here.

I stood up again and apologized to Jordy for hitting Oz, he just glared at me and when Oz let him go he took off to his room. He didn't understand.

Oz took a deep breath and looked at me, I could see the welt already forming where I had hit him and winced.

"Look man, I'm sorry. . I just. . " He shook his head.

"Doesn't matter. Nothing does." I ran a shaky hand through my hair.

"She wants to see you, before she. . if something. . " I couldn't say it. His eyes questioned mine, I was sure that the pain I saw in his was mirrored in mine. "She has cancer." A shudder went through his body and I thought he was going to collapse, but he held himself up.

"I can't go. I'm watching Jordy for my Aunt." Anger flared back into my brain, but I realized they couldn't get just any babysitter for the little guy. If he scratched them or anything, it would be a sticky situation. That's how Oz himself had been turned.

"Okay. She's at Sunnydale General. She wants to see you, if you don't show up Oz. . If you run again." It was more of a warning than anything else. I hated threatening him like this, but I wasn't going to let him make my best friend die unhappy. It wasn't going to happen while there was a breath in my body.

"I won't." I nodded and walked out the front door, I didn't need to say anything else.

~\*~End 3~\*~

>I walked into the room, completely psyched about seeing Wills again. Cordelia was sitting next to her in a chair, talking non-stop about something that she hadn't mentioned to me. Willow took my breath away. She glanced up from where she was staring at Cordelia at me and I suppressed a gasp. <p>

Her eyes were deeply rimmed and dim, she was even thinner then when I had left and looked almost like a skeleton. Her hair didn't shine like it used to and fell limply around her face, making me want to cry.

"Xander!" She said happily, I moved forward and placed a kiss on her forehead sitting next to Cordelia.

"Hey Wills, what's shaking? I mean besides your jell-o of course." I said tilting my head towards the green slop sitting on her tray, un-eaten.

She smiled her beautiful smile and I felt my heart break into a billion shards of glass, moving up my throat to choke me and assault my vocal cords. I wouldn't cry in front of her.

"Did you. . . " I nodded before her question was finished.

"Yes. He's going to come by later tonight. . " she seemed to deflate slightly as if a huge burden had been taken from her shoulders and she could finally relax.

"So Cordelia, you were saying?" Willow breathed finally, I watched her chest rising and falling with some strain.

"Yeah, so, like this guy! He's totally great and we go home. . . " I sort of tuned out of the conversation. My mind was boggled enough by the fact that Willow seemed interested in Cordelia's life in LA. Maybe it was just the fact that Willow was envious of the fact that Cordelia seemed to live life so fully and she was regretting staying here in Sunnydale with us for college, instead of going off to Oxford or New York or any college she wanted to. My heart felt stung, like I

had held her back from those experiences.

I stood up, "I'll be back. Gonna go get a soda. Anyone want?" Willow shook her head, Cordelia ordered a diet Pepsi and I left. I made my way down to the snack bar at the end of the hall, well it was pretty much a hole in the wall with a bunch of vending machines. Debating between Orange and Grape soda I put a few coins in and hit the Diet Coke button, Cordelia would just have to deal with coke. My fingers played over the buttons, still debating. Orange or Grape. .

My eyes fell on the sprite button and they filled with tears. Willow had always loved sprite, ever since we were kids. Memorys flooded my head as I remembered when we were six years old and debating over the soda.

"Sprite is so much better then that old grape junk Xander!" I had stuck out my tongue at her and took a big gulp of the grape soda.

"No. Grape is better then sprut!" I teased, knowing she hated me calling it that. She said it reminded her of a vegetable.

She stuck out her tongue at me, and I had laughed when she spilled sprite all down her top. She'd giggled along with me and we'd shared the rest of my grape soda.

My eyes were watering now, I swiped at them angrily trying not to let them fall freely. I couldn't break down yet. I quickly slammed the button for orange soda and grabbed the two cans, trying to control myself as I headed back to the room. Buffy was standing outside just staring out into space, back leaned against the wall.

"Hey Buff." She looked up at me with those huge blue eyes that I would have gladly drown in a year ago.

"Hi Xander."

"She's doing. . better then when I left. She hardly coughs. Maybe we'll have a miracle. . ." Buffy's eyes flooded and I knew I was just causing her more pain. I shut up.

"Xander the Doctors don't give her more then a day. Her lungs have deteriorated to a point where. . . She's hanging on by pure willpower now. She knows it, we all know it." Her voice was choked, tight, tears glittered on her cheeks under the harsh hospital lights. I moved forward and set the soda cans down and took her into my arms, hugging her ferociously as she cried out all her pain against me.

"I had always. ." she mumbled as her crying seemed to subside some. She moved away slightly. "I was always prepared for my own death, I knew I would die. I always figured I would be the first. I wasn't prepared for her Xander, why would anyone want to take Willow? She's the sweetest. . she means so much more then I do. Its not like somebody is going to call another Willow as soon as she's gone, I'm replaceable. She's not." I shook my head.

"Buffy, I know your feeling horrible. . . I'm feeling it too. You can't say things like that though, what would Willow do if she heard you talking like that? We both know that its not true. You are

unique, just like Willow. You can't put yourself through all this guilt. She'll feel the bad vibes." My own heart was heavy though as I said the words of comfort to my friend. Why her? Why not me? I was useless, my whole life lived in my parents house (or under it) I didn't even go to college! I was the Zeppo of the group and now my best friend, the valuable one, the one that was my better half was going to be gone.

Buffy sat down in the chair outside Willow's room. "Aint you going to go talk to her?" I asked. She shook her head, "I can't stand it. I'm afraid I'll breakdown, she's talking to Cordelia." I nodded and picked back up the soda's, I switched the diet Pepsi to my other hand and placed my palm on Buffy's shoulder. "Just because your the chosen one doesn't mean you have all the strength." With that I moved into the room again, handing Cordy her soda. She barely paused in her sentence.

Willow was smiling and nodding, suddenly she started coughing her whole body seemed to vibrate with the violence that was going on in her small body. I jumped up to go get a doctor and almost got knocked over as Oz entered the room, he was moving so quickly I couldn't even make out who it was until he was next to her. Holding her hand and pressing it to his lips.

She gave out a few more feeble coughs and then they seemed to subside. "Oz?" She choked out finally and I saw her eyes tear over as he pressed her hand against his cheek. I felt like I was invading the most intimate of moments Cordelia was up and standing next to me.

His voice was hushed, strained. He was holding back the flood of emotions he couldn't show in front of her, just like the rest of us. "Baby. . ." It was almost as if he couldn't finished. She was crying, not racking sobs she was too strong. She wouldn't let herself fall apart like that, she wanted to relish these moments with him. I could see it in her face.

"What am I going to do if you leave me? Your going to be the mother of my children Willow, we were suppose to go to the beaches of Italy and walk around until the sun came up over the sea, a perfect moment. Remember?" I turned around, stepping out of the room. Cordelia had already left. I couldn't take anymore. The door clicked behind me and my own tears fell freely. Not like before, not tears that I kept in check, choking, sobbing tears. I felt her warm arms surround me and she held me close, giving me the strength I needed. I buried my head in her raven hair and cried until there were no more tears.

>~\*~ <br>Willow died at three in the morning that night. We all got one more chance to talk to her, she had told me where to find her journal in the dorm room she and Buffy shared. She said she wanted me to share it with all the people she loved, I had nodded and hugged her. I was the only one in the room when her soul had been freed.

I didn't think of it as death, it was freedom. The freedom that Willow really needed, she was nothing like me. She needed to grow and fly, she was free to fly with the angels now. She had been my own private angel on earth, I figured god had needed her back.

I was standing beside her grave, it had been a beautiful funeral with hundreds of white roses. Oz was standing next to me on one side. Cordelia on the other. Joyce Summer's was hugging Buffy, Through my

eyes she looked like somebody had went inside her and devastated everything. She hadn't looked like that since Angel had left her. He was there also, with Wesley, we had held the funeral at night regardless of the dangers. Even Spike had showed up and placed a red rose on her casket, saying it fit her.

"Her hair was as fiery as her spirit." He'd said and then moved away from us.

Tara wasn't there, the next day after Willow had gone she'd locked herself in her room and put a bullet through her brain. She didn't leave a note, I guess she figured that without Willow there was no one who would read it. I felt bad for her.

Anya was standing apart from Cordelia and I. She knew deep down that it was over between us when she'd seen us together, she had broke it off quietly. With a lot more style and tact then I thought she had possessed in her small body.

I was going to move to LA and join Angel Investigations as soon as possible, to be with Cordelia and it would give me something to do then be a pizza guy here in Sunnydale. I even promised dead boy I wouldn't use his nick name, oops.

I knelt beside the white casket for a moment, then placed the little golden cross I had purchased on top of it. I knew she wouldn't need it but I figured it would protect her in the other world as well as it would have in ours.

Cordelia took my hand, we started to walk away. I stopped next to Oz placing my hand on his shoulder, he didn't budge just stood there in his black suit. His eyes never flickered from her beautiful casket. I moved my hand off of him and walked away, he needed to deal with this on his own. We all did.

No one had expected one of us to die so soon in life, but I guess that's just how it is. Love has to fly free, Willow was the embodiment of love on Earth. My Willow was gone, but somewhere in some other time and place I truly believed that someone else's Willow was being born.

>~\*~End~\*~ <p>

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>cried out all her pain against me. <p>

"I had always. ." she mumbled as her crying seemed to subside some. She moved away slightly. "I was always prepared for my own death, I knew I would die. I always figured I would be the first. I wasn't prepared for her Xander, why would anyone want to take Willow? She's the sweetest. . she means so much more then I do. It's not like somebody is going to call another Willow as soon as she's gone, I'm replaceable. She's not." I shook my head.

"Buffy, I know your feeling horrible. . . I'm feeling it too. You can't say things like that though, what would Willow do if she heard you talking like that? We both know that its not true. You are unique, just like Willow. You can't put yourself through all this guilt. She'll feel the bad vibes." My own heart was heavy though as I said the words of comfort to my friend. Why her? Why not me? I was useless, my whole life lived in my parents house or under  
>it. I didn't even go to college! I was the Zeppo of the group, and now my best friend, the valuable one, the one that was my better half was going to be gone. <p>

Buffy sat down in the chair outside Willow's room. "Aren't you going to go talk to her?" I asked. She shook her head, "I can't stand it. I'm afraid I'll break down, she's talking to Cordelia." I nodded and picked back up the

>soda's, I switched the diet Coke to my other hand and placed my palm on Buffy's shoulder. "Just because your the chosen one doesn't mean you have all the strength." With that I moved into the room again, handing Cordy her soda. She barely paused in her sentence.

<p>

Willow was smiling and nodding, suddenly she started coughing her whole body seemed to vibrate with the violence that was going on in her small body. I jumped up to go get a doctor and almost got knocked over as Oz entered the room, he was moving so quickly I couldn't even make out who it was until he was next to her. Holding her hand and pressing it to his lips.

She gave out a few more feeble coughs and then they seemed to subside. "Oz?" She choked out finally and I saw her eyes tear over as he pressed her hand against his cheek. I felt like I was invading the most intimate of moments. Cordelia was up and standing next to me.

His voice was hushed, strained. He was holding back the flood of emotions he couldn't show in front of her, just like the rest of us. "Baby. . " It was almost as if he couldn't finished. She was crying, not racking sobs, she was too strong. She wouldn't let herself fall apart like that, she wanted to relish these moments with him. I could see it in her face.

"What am I going to do if you leave me? Your going to be the mother of my children, Willow, we were suppose to go to the beaches of Italy

and walk around until the sun came up over the sea, a perfect moment. Remember?" I turned around, stepping out of the room. Cordelia had already left. I couldn't take anymore. The door clicked behind me and my own tears fell

>freely. Not like before, not tears that I kept in check, choking, sobbing tears. I felt her warm arms surround me and she held me close, giving me the strength I needed. I buried my head in her raven hair and cried until there were no more tears. <p>

~\*~

Willow died at three in the morning that night. We all got one more chance to talk to her, she had told me where to find her journal in the dorm room she and Buffy shared. She said she wanted me to share it with all the people she loved, I had nodded and hugged her. I was the only one in the room when her soul had been freed.

I didn't think of it as death, it was freedom. The freedom that Willow really needed, she was nothing like me. She needed to grow and fly, she was free to fly with the angels now. She had been my own private angel on earth, I figured god had needed her back.

>~\*~ <p>

I was standing beside her grave, it had been a beautiful funeral with hundreds of white roses. Oz was standing next to me on one side. Cordelia on the other. Joyce Summers was hugging Buffy. Through my eyes she looked like somebody had went inside her and devastated

>everything. She hadn't looked like that since Angel had left her. He was there also, with Wesley, we had held the funeral at night regardless of the dangers. Even Spike had showed up and placed a red rose on her casket, saying it fit her. <p>

"Her hair was as fiery as her spirit." He'd said and then moved away from us.

Tara wasn't there, the next day after Willow had gone she'd locked herself in her room and put a bullet through her brain. She didn't leave a note, I guess she figured that without Willow there was no one who would read it. I felt bad for her.

Anya was standing apart from Cordelia and I. She knew deep down that it was over between us when she'd seen us together, she had broke it off quietly. With a lot more style and tact then I thought she had possessed in her small body.

I was going to move to LA and join Angel Investigations as soon as possible, to be with Cordelia and it would give me something to do other than be a pizza guy here in Sunnydale. I even promised dead boy I wouldn't use his nick name, oops.

I knelt beside the white casket for a moment, then placed the little golden cross I had purchased on top of it. I knew she wouldn't need it, but I figured it would protect her in the other world as well as it would have in ours.

Cordelia took my hand, we started to walk away. I stopped next to Oz placing my hand on his shoulder, he didn't budge just stood there in his black suit. His eyes never flickered from her beautiful casket. I moved my hand off of him and walked away, he needed to deal with this

on his own. We all did.

> <p>

No one had expected one of us to die so soon in life, but I guess that's just how it is. Love has to fly free, Willow was the embodiment of love on Earth. My Willow was gone, but somewhere in some other time and place I truly believed that someone else's Willow was being born.

>~\*~End~\*~ <p>

End  
file.